

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 8, 11, 18, 25, 28, 35, 40, 43, and 48-50, and insert new claims 54-65, as follows. A complete listing of the current pending claims is provided below and supersedes all previous claim lists.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:
collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;
determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;
collecting a third x-ray image, wherein at least a portion of the first x-ray image and at least a portion of the third x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
enhancing a feature in the third x-ray image by adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image;
wherein the third x-ray image is collected without performing a weighted subtraction of the first x-ray image.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images are generated in a sequence.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing a image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.
6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the adjusting comprises subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.
8. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a x-ray image, comprising:
 - means for collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;
 - means for determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;
 - means for collecting a third x-ray image; without performing a weighted subtraction of the first x-ray image, wherein at least a portion of the first x-ray image and at least a portion of the third x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
 - means for enhancing a feature in the third x-ray image by adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image.
9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for performing an image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.
10. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the means for adjusting comprises means for subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.
11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:
 - collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;
 - determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;
 - collecting a third x-ray image, wherein at least a portion of the first x-ray image and at least a portion of the third x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
 - enhancing a feature in the third x-ray image by adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image;
 - wherein the third x-ray image is collected without performing a weighted subtraction of the first x-ray image.

12. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images are generated in a sequence.
13. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
14. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.
15. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.
16. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.
17. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the adjusting comprises subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.
18. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:
 - collecting one or more x-ray images;
 - determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;
 - collecting an input x-ray image, wherein at least a portion of one of the one or more x-ray images and at least a portion of the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
 - enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image;wherein the input x-ray image is collected without performing a weighted subtraction of the one or more x-ray images.
19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the collecting the one or more x-ray images comprises generating the one or more x-ray images in a sequence.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the input x-ray image contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.
22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.
23. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.
24. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the enhancing comprises subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.
25. (Currently Amended) A system for processing an image, comprising:
means for collecting one or more x-ray images;
means for determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;
means for collecting an input x-ray image, without performing a weighted subtraction of the one or more x-ray images, wherein at least a portion of one of the one or more x-ray images and at least a portion of the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object;
and
means for enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image.
26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.
27. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the means for enhancing comprises means for subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.

28. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:
- collecting one or more x-ray images;
 - determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;
 - collecting an input x-ray image, wherein at least a portion of one of the one or more x-ray images and at least a portion of the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
 - enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image;
- wherein the input x-ray image is collected without performing a weighted subtraction of the one or more x-ray images.
29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the collecting the one or more images comprises generating the one or more x-ray images in a sequence.
30. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the input x-ray image contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
31. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.
32. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.
33. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.
34. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the enhancing comprises subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.

35. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:
obtaining a first x-ray image;
obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are
obtained using x-ray radiation having ~~an~~ a same energy level, and at least a portion of the first x-
ray image and at least a portion of the second x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of
an object; and
determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first and second x-ray
images.
36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the first and second x-ray images are
generated in a sequence.
37. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the first and second x-ray images each
contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
38. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the determining a composite image
comprises subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the
second x-ray image.
39. (Original) The method of claim 35, further comprising determining a value associated
with a contrast of the composite image.
40. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a x-ray image, comprising:
means for obtaining a first x-ray image;
means for obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images
are obtained using x-ray radiation having ~~an~~ a same energy level, and at least a portion of the
first x-ray image and at least a portion of the second x-ray image comprise images of a same
portion of an object; and
means for determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first x-ray
image and at least a portion of the second x-ray image.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the second x-ray image.
42. (Original) The system of claim 40, further comprising means for determining a value associated with a contrast of the composite image.
43. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:
obtaining a first x-ray image;
obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are obtained using x-ray radiation having ~~an~~ a same energy level, and at least a portion of the first x-ray image and at least a portion of the second x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first and second x-ray images.
44. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the first and second x-ray images are generated in a sequence.
45. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the first and second x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
46. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the determining a composite image comprises subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the second x-ray image.
47. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the process further comprising determining a value associated with a contrast of the composite image.

48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the feature comprises a moving feature, which is a characteristic in the third x-ray image due to a movement of the portion of the object.

49. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8, wherein the feature comprises a moving feature, which is a characteristic in the third x-ray image due to a movement of the portion of the object.

50. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the feature comprises a moving feature, which is a characteristic in the third x-ray image due to a movement of the portion of the object.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are generated using an imaging device that remains stationary between a first time at which the first x-ray image is generated and a second time at which the second x-ray image is generated.

52. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 40, wherein the means for obtaining the first x-ray image and the means for obtaining the second x-ray image comprises an imaging device that remains stationary between a first time at which the first x-ray image is generated and a second time at which the second x-ray image is generated.

53. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are generated using an imaging device that remains stationary between a first time at which the first x-ray image is generated and a second time at which the second x-ray image is generated.

54. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the feature in the third x-ray image is enhanced without using a contrast media.

55. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising generating the first x-ray image and the second x-ray image using x-ray having a same energy level.
56. (New) The system of claim 8, wherein the means for enhancing the feature in the third x-ray image does not include a contrast media.
57. (New) The system of claim 8, further comprising means for generating the first and the second x-ray images using x-ray having a same energy level.
58. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the feature in the third x-ray image is enhanced without using a contrast media.
59. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the process further comprises generating the first x-ray image and the second x-ray image using x-ray having a same energy level.
60. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the feature in the input x-ray image is enhanced without using a contrast media.
61. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more x-ray images comprises a plurality of x-ray images, the method further comprising generating the plurality of x-ray images using x-ray having a same energy level.
62. (New) The system of claim 25, wherein the means for enhancing the feature in the input x-ray image does not include a contrast media.
63. (New) The system of claim 25, wherein the one or more x-ray images comprises a plurality of x-ray images, the system further comprising means for generating the plurality of x-ray images using x-ray having a same energy level.

64. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the feature in the input x-ray image is enhanced without using a contrast media.

65. (New) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the one or more x-ray images comprises a plurality of x-ray images, the process further comprising generating the plurality of x-ray images using x-ray having a same energy level.